

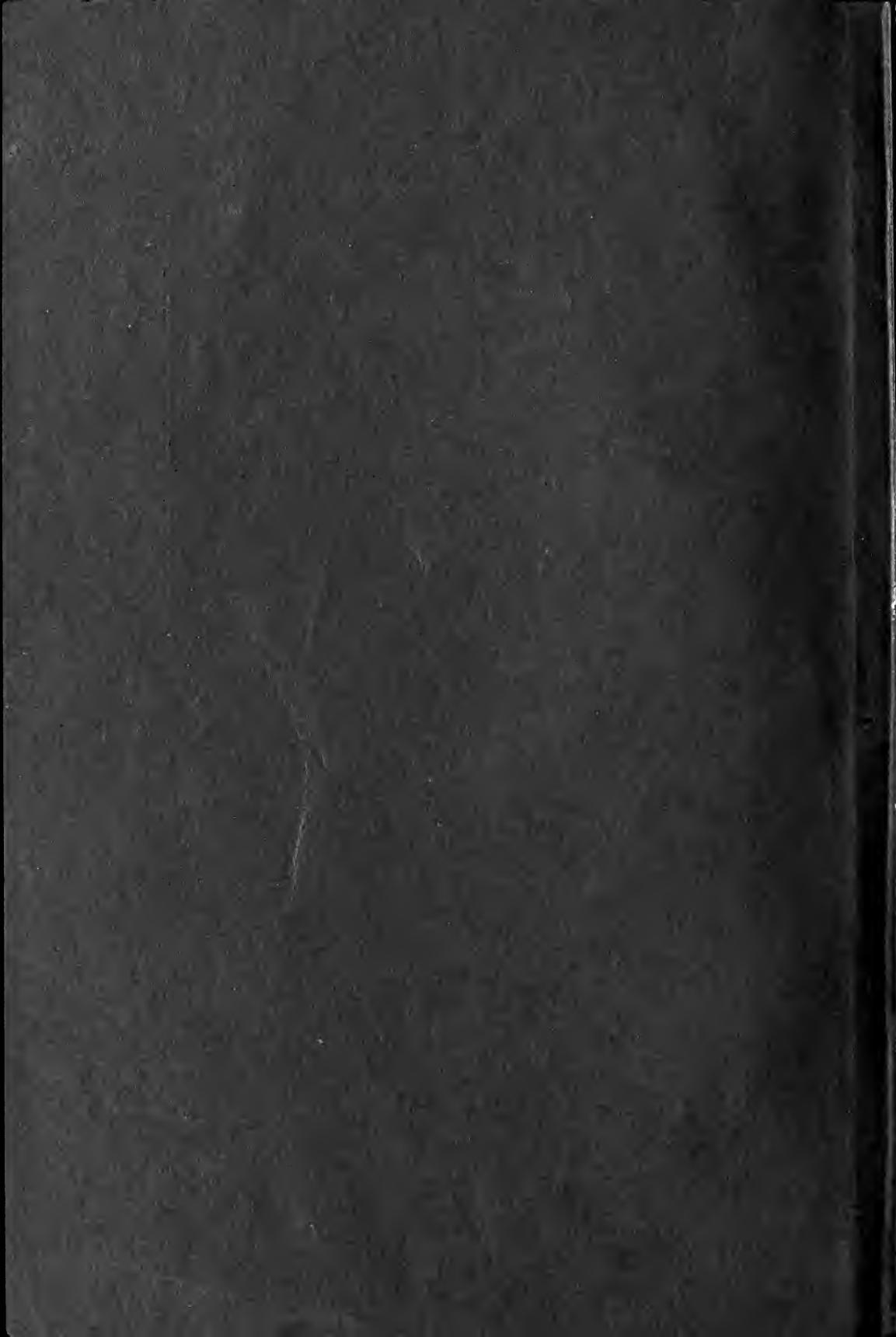
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The Imitation of Cain

A Few Words
on
Modern Russia
by
Alessandro H. Carasso



Frederick, Maryland, 1921







A. H. CARASSO, PH. D.

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S.W. Recd. Oct. 18/33

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

These few sketches which are but a slight attempt to gather together some of my scattered articles, appeared in The Outlook, N. Y. Times, N. Y. World, Brooklyn Eagle, Washington Post, etc., and also fragments of lectures delivered throughout the country,—are not intended for the book market, but purely as an accommodation for my friends interested in this vital subject.

Having lived in Russia for nearly a decade, I have had the time and opportunity to make a thorough study of that unfortunate country. The last year of my sojourn was passed under the Bolshevik Rule, a year of vicissitudes, which included hunger, captivity and eventually an escape to the United States. My knowledge is accordingly first hand, and to some extent I have tried to incorporate actual events, experiences and people into these few pages.

My thanks are due to the editors of the above mentioned publications for the permission to reprint their rightful material.

ALES. H. CARASSO,
Frederick, Md.,
December, 1920.



TO MY ONLY CHILD, JURAH-GEORGE,
WHOSE FATE IS YET IN THE HANDS
OF GOD, THIS DOCUMENT OF TYR-
ANNY I DEDICATE.

The Imitation of Cain

BY

A. H. CARASSO

GERMANY'S ROLE

Turning the pages of the French Revolution, one sees with amazement the remarkable similarity to horrible happenings now in Russia. The hundred and thirty odd years intervening these bloody epochs is barely noticeable. The tremendous progress in industry and culture developed within this span of time has brought no change in the art of Revolution. Telegraph and railroad, steamship and wireless, telephone, street car, automobile and aeroplane display no distinguishing role in the eternal struggle of masses and classes. In other words the remarkable material evolution of the past century or so has wrought no transfiguration of human nature.

The tiger prowling among mortal lusts in the Eighteenth Century has risen to towering height in the present, the Twentieth Century. Beasts in human form, as Robespierre, Danton, Marat, Charlotte Corday and others, have now merely changed name to Lenine, Trotzky, Bruievitch, Zinoveiff,

Sverdloff, Uritsky, Stekloff and Madame Colontay. There are even the same parties: Octobrists—Jakovines (Bolsheviki), Gerondists (Mensheviki, or Social Revolutionaries), and so forth. But this point of difference is paramount;—the dignity and grace, the spirit and sincerity of the old guillotinists are absolutely lacking in the Russian-hangmen of to-day.

In the French Revolution, as in the three Russian upheavals; of 1905 and of February and October 1917, neighboring Germany played no unimportant part. Her's was always the hand outstretched to traitors and destructionists in both Revolutionary camps. Her cannon always stood ready to shelter these undesirable perverters. To her ears the wailing and gnashing of chaos and despair uplifted from neighboring homes always sounded as sweet music. Dangling the hook in her neighbor's streams of blood and tears was always a favorite sport.

But the Twentieth Century Teutons were not unmindful of the overwhelming defeat suffered by the famous Brunswick army in 1791. Another strategy was therefore attempted during the Russian revolution; instead of armies, Prussia sent a handful of political adventurers who could play upon the base instincts of the unenlightened Russian masses. With the aid of these adventurers, literally showered with gold, Germany succeeded in accomplishing what the Brunswick forces could never do, namely, the collapse of a formidable nation of two hundred millions.

Germany was indeed aware that Russia, because of her powerful alliances, could never be de-

feated in open battle. Therefore, even in the midst of her triumphant beginning she had not much faith in a victorious outcome. During the first year of the war, when America was still protecting German interests in Russia, it befell me as courier to visit Germany. These were the days of conquest, entire provinces of Poland, Belgium and France with their enormous resources having quickly come into German possession. Nevertheless, all was not aglow in political circles. In response to my inquiry came the complaining reply: "The whole world is against us. Now if the revolt should break in Russia then our victory would be assured. With degenerate France and 'watery' England we can reckon at will." (America was not seriously considered then—merely a "paper hero").

Germany scattered her agents over the surface of the globe penetrating everywhere Russian revolutionists could be found. She perceived the sinister truth that every ideal group must have its turn-coats, and with these turn-coats she drove her bargain. Gold, the sustenance of turn-coats, was little spared. Thousands, indeed millions of dollars, passed from hand to hand, from border to border.

When the February revolution suddenly broke forth in Russia as of its own accord, when the reins of rule passed into the hands of such loyal and devoted sons as Milyukoff, Count Lvoff, Cutchkoff, Shingarcff, and when the rhetorical phrases of Kerensky were reaching far beyond the Russian borders; Germany started momentarily in awe, confusion and terror. The early days of this great and wonderful bloodless revolution presaged a genuine

republic, such as the United States, conceivably, of whose power Germany was now gradually becoming convinced. Imagine, a republic of two hundred million souls; in all of Germany's dreams, she never pictured such nightmare. But this fright was short, the first decree of Kerensky, absolving the ten million army of respect to officers and discipline, was sufficient to revive the German hope immediately. The enemy became more active than ever. Thousands of agents, with car-loads of gold, poured across the undefended Russian borders—and the carousal began.

Together with those sincere Revolutionists for whom the gates of their home land were opened gladly, were smuggled traitors bent on fulfilling the German mission. With their assistance the habit of fraternizing was fostered between Russian and Teuton soldiers. For the brandy bottle or tobacco pouch generously offered by the German, the unsophisticated Slav willingly exchanged his weapons which, as he imagined, Russia no longer needed and often, too, his uniform and boots. This fraternization among the "international proletariat" was preached by thousands of Russian "revolutionists" whose General Headquarters were in the gorgeous palace of the ex-Czar's favorite, dancer, Kshesynskaia.

And the greatest Russian mouth-piece "**THE FIRST LOVE OF THE RUSSIAN REVOLUTION**" as the people then called Kerensky, anxious to correct the error of his first decree, which he realized at last, began speaking, and writing other decrees but instead of bettering things he made them

worse. The Russian soldier had already perceived the weakness of the "hero leader," who abolished the death penalty and opened jails, and was consequently demoralized himself. Without the least qualm, battalions of men abandoned arms and broke ranks, making tracks to the Capital where a splendid reward was expected for three years of suffering in the trenches. But the Russian nation, gradually recovering itself, did not receive the deserters with any cordiality. Then—then these deserters were treated to a welcome reception in Kshesynskaia's palace, where Lenine, Trotsky, Kameniev and Kemp had entrenched themselves. Machine guns and cannon looked on with a friendly eye from every door and window. The gory Bolshevik pennant blazoned with the flaring inscription of pure German gold flaunted proudly over the old city of Peter the Great.

Thus was laid the foundation of the bloody Bolshevik Army. Yes, on this front the treacherous tactics of Germany were indeed successful. But one event was not foreseen by Wilhelm! Namely, that he too would have to drain the cup in which he had administered poison to his neighbor.

KERENSKY

Now, who is responsible for the ruin of that great country, for the oceans of innocent blood and for the infectious red disease which is poisoning the world? Who endowed the red maniacs with such a destructive power? Nicholai Lenine could, positively never have gained it, were it not for the utter impotence of the new republic's absolute dictator, Alexander Kerensky. One glance at his works during the short term of his dictatorship will show you how he had justified the confidence the great nation had bestowed upon him.

From the moment of his advent in the political arena, Kerensky, as it seemed to any capable observer, was merely an opportunist. His decrees and oratory, redundant with innumerable pretty phrases, were seldom consistent. In fact, what could really be expected from a young man in the thirties, of mediocre abilities?

Who was Kerensky before the revolution? An average lawyer, prominent merely for a few "radical" cases which he fought and seldom won. Posing before the working class as a "champion of persecuted peoples" his declamation, reeking with class feeling and pathos appealed strongly to the indiscriminating proletariat—smoothing the path for him directly into their hearts. Thence—into the Duma.

I recall my first glimpse of the **Man, Kerensky**. It was on February 11, 1917, in the courtyard of the Tavritchesky Palace. He was in the midst of an eloquent discourse, apologizing to the laboring masses for assuming the ministry of justice without their consent.

“Time was brief,” he argued, “The first republic had to be formed over night for us—to present it before the great Russian people today in place of the old rotten regime whose favorites—partly behind these heavy doors you see yonder”—indicating the inner portals of the Duma.

This was the first day of Russia’s liberation. Kerensky revelled as the hero of the working class. Little astonishment was therefore, to be found in the fact that the multitude embraced his profuse apology with thundering applause and thoughtless shouting.

“Long live the first minister of the people, the comrade, Kerensky!”

Together with my wife I studied the scene from my vantage point near the outer stairway—the improvised platform from which Kerensky was delivering his harangue—and carefully, his personal appearance.

He was barely more than medium height, of slender physique, rather weary-worn for his thirty odd years, his eyes, not distinctive, of greenish-brown color, and ever restless, his narrow brow intensified the sensuousness of his mouth and retreating chin—this last feature hinting of a weak character.

“Well, what do you think of him?” my wife interrupted my study.

"He impresses me little," I was forced to admit. "Lots of pomposity—but utter lack of genuine greatness. No conviction. Also his talk—more bluster than logic."

I am not certain that my wife agreed with me that day. Since Kerensky was for the moment the idol raging in the hearts of the young women. But in the course of days since elapsing, I am sure, that she was constrained to recognize the truth of my first impression.

Vladimir Bourtzeff, one of the most honest and competent Russian revolutionists, declared that he did not regard Kerensky as a sincere socialist. Bourtzeff was indeed correct. Nevertheless it is true that Kerensky must be considered one of the foremost figures of the February revolt. He severed the thread of the Russian monarchy.

When the Czar issued his decree on February 8th, disbanding the Duma, it must be admitted Kerensky was the one who defiantly exhorted a fraction of the delegates to remain in the Tavritchesky palace. It was Kerensky's inciting argument that inflamed his colleagues into the combative opinion that they, not the Monk Rasputin's favorites were representing the people.

Yes, for the February revolution we owe much to Kerensky. But that October reaction must also be attributed to him, for none other was so deeply responsible for the tragic Bolshevik debacle. It was his covetousness for titles and higher political achievements that ruined Russia. The post of ministry of justice in the new regime, which he assumed without waiting for the workers' consent, had

not long suited the mediocre lawyer Kerensky; his ambition seemed hitched to a higher star. Strong self-interest, evidently goaded him onward. The Russian proletariat, versed in political as in Martian affairs yielded willingly to his design: "Wouldst assume the ministry of the interior?" "Very well, assume it."

"Wouldst have supreme command of the army and navy?" "Why then become commander in chief."

"Wouldst enjoy the Czar's Chambers in the Winter Palace?" "Why gladly, comrade, take even the entire castle. We believe in you. We trust in you. Only make us happy!"

No wonder the intellectuals jested that his next step would be the Patriarchate.

It is self-evident that a pure lover of his people would not have danced so nimbly from pillar to post, eagerly seizing after positions of importance, tho lacking necessary training and knowledge. What remotest contact could this average lawyer ever have had with matters of army and navy administration? Does a genuine patriot seek so ardently his personal interests when these are but harmful to his nation? Truly, Kerensky must have considered himself a second Napoleon—the Napoleon of the Russian revival. In his eagerness to gain the popular confidence, Kerensky had, first off, issued a decree that all enlisted men in army and navy be on terms of equality with their officers. All insignias of rank, as epaulettes, crosses of honor, medals, etc., were to be abolished. None but the revolutionary cross was to be recognized; despite the fact that the

whereabouts of a revolutionary army were then unknown, even to Kerensky. We know now the result of this perverse manifesto; massacre of thousands of officers in Cronstadt, Wyburg, and elsewhere. How did Kerensky react to this gruesomeness? What a shame to tell. Instead of applying vigorous measures, without which all revolution is helpless, this "Statesman" broke into tears and like the Pharisees of old, beat his breast before the crowded audience of the State Theatre. "Oh rather had I died two months ago than have lived to see this state of affairs," was his wail now classic. And I quite agree with him. Russia would have been spared the degradation to which she has been reduced as the result of his surviving the first revolution.

Soon after this tragic declaration, Kerensky in his great despair, performed one of his greatest political acts, namely: he abandoned his wife and married a notorious stage beauty.

Realizing at this time the topsy-turvy condition of the country, the anarchy brooding abroad, and the wily gain of Germany at every one of his indiscreet steps, Kerensky attempted to recall his demoralized army. But this had now become a disorganized horde of murderers and robbers roaming the country. We know the futility of his pathetic appeals. He accomplished nothing more than the gathering of a vast mob of criminals he himself had released from jail. A touch of the comic was in this last decree of Kerensky's, for instance, his promise to all freed criminals willing to appear at an appointed time, to receive only half of their legitimate penalty. The absurdity of such law making is obvious,

but at that moment in Russia, nothing seemed absolutely preposterous. Indeed, certain defectives even faithfully kept their voluntary appointment with the commission.

An official asked some of these conscientious convicts: "How much longer were you to serve?" One replied that his sentence had expired a week ago. Another admitted he had a minor portion of a term yet due. "For how long were you sentenced?" queried the official, the first convict, "for life, your honor," was the unwitting reply.

With such remedies Kerensky tried to administer to the gasping, dying Russia; how effectively—we can see only today.

For a little while, he was spurred to greater activity, when his reputation was nearly lost in the eyes of the allied entente, he flew to all fronts spitting volleys of encouragement at the soldiers, exhorting the officers whom shortly before he nearly annihilated, and recalling such famous generals as Alexeieff, Ruzsky, Krasnoff, the honest Korniloff and others. His grandiose promises to these fighters were productive of that memorable tenth of August battle, where it almost seemed that the great Russian Army had come to life again. It almost seemed so!

But it merely was the last flicker of a dying flame, glowing momentarily as all of Kerensky's achievements. His resounding phrases were immediately thereafter drowned in the overwhelming tumult brought on by the energetic preachers of the Bolshevik gospel. The latter keenly exposed the weaknesses of their quixotic opponent; no difficult task for such clever stump speakers as Trotzky or

Zinovieff. They demonstrated N. Lenine's definite program in contrast to Kerensky's which did not exist. Dazzling were their promises to the peasants and workers of equal land and wealth distribution, to be effected immediately, and not when Kerensky took it into his head to call a National Assembly. They have pledged a heavenly Kingdom on earth with Lenine as their Savior and protector. And the unenlightened Russian Masses have willingly believed, and battalion after battalion deserted the Kerensky trenches and joined the communist camp. City after city had thus unresistingly passed into the hands of the enemy. In addition to this calamity arose the obscure Korniloff—Kerensky affair, hastening the end. Tho regarded as a "mystery" by some, there is in reality no secret as to what actually happened.

When the force of his last blunder in the form of the lightning growth of the Bolsheviks, was brought home to Kerensky, he was seriously scared.

The frequent parades of the Extreme Reds, with rifles and banners bearing the menacing slogans: "Down with the Bourgeois Rulers" "Full Power for the Soviets" "Down with the bloody War," "The Soil for the Peasants," etc., all these had their effect. The multitude began to feel cool towards its "First Love" and turned to their new idol "the friend of the people" Nicolai Lenine. In desperation Kerensky made secret overtures to the ablest and most beloved Russian General, Korniloff, beseeching him to advance immediately to Petrograd and help sway the reins of power.

Aged General Korniloff, a genuine patriot,

waived the frequent insults heaped upon him by the young upstart upon hearing that Petrograd, city of his heart's desire, was in danger. Hastily he rallied the bravest of his loyal remnant and began to march at once. But Lenine received word of this in time, and unhesitatingly trained the throats of his machine-guns and field-pieces with utmost accuracy at Kerensky's dwelling chambers, the Royal Winter Palace. A well-armed Red Guard composed of the premier's own former stalwarts inspected all persons entering or leaving the dictator's grounds. The Sailors always more friendly to Lenine, anchored two battleships opposite the Winter Palace. And one of the Bolshevik leaders, I believe the late Uritzky, telephoned to Kerensky bluntly: "The moment comrade Kerensky undertakes any negotiations with Korniloff, he and his family will be blown to the skies. Our cannons are watching you at every side, and they will tell you it's no joke."

Kerensky, whose bravery had consisted mostly in bristling phrases, here meekly acquiesced. In sharp distinction to others of Russia's loyal sons, who have more than once offered their lives for the salvation of their beloved motherland, Kerensky bided his time and finally managed to flee Petrograd in safety.

As to the sequel, it is well known. Korniloff confident of meeting Kerensky, courageously and unsuspectingly advanced toward the impending catastrophe. Right into the teeth of the most pernicious civil war the world has known, marched this brave loyal old general to his fate.

The internecine strife resulting is still rife, father still fighting against son, brother against brother, in the perfect imitation of Cain.

To celebrate this fraternal bloodshed, the good souls of Russia have burst into the Czar's treasured wine cellars and drowned their long parched palates until they reached unconsciousness. Then began the unspeakable atrocities upon the "Death Battalion" of helpless women, originally formed to awaken the courage of their wavering brothers and husbands. The drunken soldiers were not sated with the shameful rape of their sisters, but after the repulsive act flung their victims into the dark flowing Neva.

"Here you are women! Ha-ha-ha." Join the army! resounded their bestial laughter.

Thus was celebrated the birth of the Bolshevik regime.

RUSSIA OF BYGONE DAYS AND THE RUSSIA OF TODAY.

Russia is a land of eternal struggle. The year 1910, during which I arrived in Russia, was almost as reactionary as the year 1919, during which I was forced to escape from the Bolshevik Oppression. But ten years ago, it was the Russian Bismarck,—Premier Stolipyn, who crushed every liberal thought and movement with his iron hand. It was he who brought the 1905 uprising to such a tragic end. His notorious “neck-lace” as one of the sarcastic Duma delegates described his gallows-rope—strangled every red throat in the Country. He was reactionary to the depths of his soul—a brutal but an honest man. Who knows, but perhaps his keen vision foresaw all that is now happening in Russia—the land he knew and loved so well. Yes, reaction was then at its zenith. Nevertheless, it was the proletarian revolt of 1905 that tore the veil from many an obscure corner and exposed Russia in a new and entrancing light which aroused the curiosity of the world.

Russia was always a fairy land. Many good souls in faraway countries have fancied that in Petrograd or Moscow wolves and bears are leisurely prowling thru the streets at midday. But if this idea has been exaggerated in regard to the metropolises, the legend contains a kernel of truth in the case of provincial villages where the above mentioned visitors are not so rare. At the same time

Russia possessed the most excellent theatres, as Stainislawsky's Art Theatre in Moscow, and the Maryinsky Opera House, in Petrograd, with a ballet the most perfect in the world. There are the great picture galleries, the "Hermitage" in Petrograd and the Tretiakoff in Moscow. Indeed, at the same time that the bears and wolves roamed freely thru the streets of the villages, in the capitals, every cobbler and doorman was in reach of a telephone. Yes, Russia is a land of contrasts. In the village or hamlet where most homes were roofless, one could locate a villa or palace unrivaled in splendor anywhere on the continent. Oh, so beautiful was this country! The golden domes of her innumerable Byzantine churches fairly gleamed throughout the land. And when on a holiday morning thousands of gigantic bells pealed their chimes thru the skies, it was almost incredible to fancy such divine harmony wrought on this sinful sphere — — — Then there is the diversity of the land. You can ride for days and weeks and see only plain steppes without tree or shrub—mere dreary stretches, such as the steppes of Ufa and Orenburg. Then behold the Caucasus; hundreds and hundreds of miles of mountains, wonderfully striking mountains, as the Kasbeck and the Elbrus—perhaps the most imposing in the world. Then the endless expanse of waters; lakes, rivers and seas. What can be more charming than the primitive banks of the Volga; especially the steep cliffs behind Nishny, whence the famous river pirate, Attaman-Stienka Razine, threw the Persian Princess into the deep. This river runs for thousands of miles through Russia—from the Ger-

man Border to the Urals and Caucasus. The seas—Black, Caspian, and Baltic, open up all parts of Asia and Europe. Then consider Crimea and the Ukraine an area equivalent to several European countries entirely covered with gardens of all fruits of the world. Then view Siberia—you can wander there for days and weeks, weeks and months and see nothing but woods, woods and woods. The famous Taiga.

All these scenes I have visited myself during my sojourn of years in Russia, oftentimes alone, oftentimes in the company of American tourists.

Now, her hospitality. Where in the world could foreigners receive so cordial and sincere a reception as in Russia? One arrives here without tongue, without friends, without a solitary acquaintance; and within a fortnight he has been already welcomed into the best Russian homes. Naturally, one must possess a certain amount of education and refinement. Education, in particular, was there considered on a high plane. The person with education, with some linguistic ability, and in addition, of foreign birth, such a person was highly appreciated, and beloved in Russia. With the kindly assistance of his friends, his was open access to the highest social and official life. And the manner in which such education was there rewarded can scarcely be conceived in America. And of course such personages as ambassadors and consuls were reckoned among the first men of the land.

Still more remarkable in hospitality to foreigners was the villages. One entered a peasant's hut and asked for a glass of water. He soon was invited

to the table, where after a few moments a jug of milk and a loaf of bread appeared. Forgetting his daily task the peasant started to question you about your country, family and business, and if it would grow dark, or begin to rain, you might be sure, to find shelter here. But don't offer him any remuneration, this would only insult him.

RUSSIA, THE HOME OF MODERN MUSIC, LETTERS AND ART.

Since the early eighties, Russia had also occupied one of the foremost ranks in the world of art. Glinky, Tschaikowsky, Rubenstein, fathers of Russian classical music, not only founded, but erected the structure of a new epoch. They were the first to transcend the melodramatic Romanticism of the Italian and French composers and wave their magic wand all over the world.

Europe and America suddenly saw upon the stage new un-puppet like characters who told of their human experiences and feelings, in their humanly musical language. From king to peasant, each lived and sang his own song, the first of his palaces, the last of his thatched cottages. The old fashioned shepherds who were wont to sing truly beautiful but angelically high melodies were left in the background. In a word, the great Russians created a vast human realism which has reigned to the present day and will, I think, reign as long as human souls are human. The Operas: "Life for the Czar," by Glinky, "The Queen of Spades" and "Eugenie Onyegin," by Tschaikowsky, and "The Demon", by Rubenstein, have no peer in the musical world. Even their spiritual children and grand-children as Mussorgsky, Rymsky-Korsakoff, Rachmaninoff, Scriabin, and scores of others stand asunder from the horde.

The power of the Russian artist lies in his extraordinarily broad culture. No country has such educated artists as Russia. Commencing with the gigantic Poushikine, Tolstoi, Dostoyefsky, Turgeneff, and concluding with the self-educated Gorky, Andrieff, Tchekhoff, Kuprine and Archibasheff—all were products not of university but of universal learning. Some of them knew and controlled from four to eight languages, as for instance Tolstoi and Turgenieff who hardly could tell which of the European tongues they knew best (and in the word "knew" I mean all it implies, speaking, writing, reading the entire literature and understanding the psychology of their nations). For this reason we may read without wonder "War and Peace" by Tolstoi, where all intricacies of military strategy, natural history, geography, biology, romanticism, music and history are treated as by authorities specializing in each field. Where in the world can one find such deep psychological research as in Dostoyefsky's romances? His "Brothers Karamasoff" and "Crime and Punishment" do not have and, it appears to me, never will have any match. Russia has also world-renowned scholars as Podvitzotsky, Metchnikoff, Mendelieff. Indeed, this is a land of contrasts. Hand in hand with eighty per cent. of illiterate population we find such an Herculean learning restricted to a few.

The same is the case with Russian painters. Commencing with Bruloff, famous for his immortal painting, "The Last Days of Pompeii", and concluding with the contemporary Riepin whose "Ivan the Terrible," is internationally famous, all are incom-

parable in their learning, psychological analysis and technique. I do not mention here such original geniuses as Ivanoff, Vasnietzoff Sieroff and Wrubel.

THE RUSSIA OF TODAY.

Unfortunately, this is in the past. This is Russia of bygone days—before the war and revolution. The Russia of today is entirely different—another Russia, without hospitality, without musicians, without writers, without painters. No, the last may be said to still exist, but they are of another species: I call them the “Red Painters,” for they recognize no other color than that of crimson blood. These are the Bolsheviki. Of this great country of endless riches, country of artists and thinkers, the Bolsheviki have made a woe-begone mad-house. Madmen have risen over the land, overwhelmed all those opposing them and imprisoned them in dungeons. As to all demented, the color of red appeals to them and they redden the world around them.

Tragedy of tragedies. Tragedy of madmen. Its stage managers have hidden it from the gaze of an outer audience. And most tragic of all, this scene of millions of souls weltering in blood is merely a rehearsal boding an even greater, grimmer spectacle to follow. Indeed, the bloodiest of pageants will surely follow unless a courageous public opinion arises to the cry of the moment and calls a halt to the tragic farce. And farce it is, like that of Edgar Allan Poe’s, in which is depicted an uprising among the inmates of a lunatic asylum who bind their keepers and run the asylum to suit themselves.

Such a mad-house is Russia today. Under the open heavens these madmen wreak their lust. With the blood of millions they stain their hands and everything about them; cities, streets, homes, schools. The death cry of their victims sounds sweet to their ears for they spare none. They kill relentlessly, incessantly—no matter who their victims are, Russians or foreigners.

THE PERSECUTION OF FOREIGNERS.

The wholesale arrest of foreigners is due apparently to the aversion on the part of the Bolsheviks to permit the outside world to witness their maniac doings. Any foreigner is liable to suspicion and immediate arrest. Those capable of raising large funds may sometimes bribe their way to freedom. There are many today lingering in dungeons where their only sustenance is a bit of hope, a pitcher of water and a quarter of a pound of bread every other day. Then sometimes they mysteriously disappear.

American citizens have also tasted bread in Russian jails. As soon as the news spread of our soldiers landing on the Murman coast a series of wholesale arrests of Americans began.

The extraordinary Commission, a sort of mediaeval inquisition, gathered in all discoverable Americans and Frenchmen. Some have been able to buy their way to freedom at a price of from ten thousand to one hundred thousand rubles. Many others who unfortunately cannot afford to pay such big sums are still festering in underground cells, awaiting their release here or in the world eternal. Any moment our American brethren may be sent to Cronstadt to be shot, victims of Bolshevik's wild mania.

Hear them. Hear them cry: America help!

Nor did I escape the unfortunate fate of these foreigners caught in their grasp. On the thirteenth of November, 1918, I was compelled to visit on business the "Northern Commune" as the old city of Peter the Great is now called. During the day I had a premonition that something evil would befall me, for at every step I made thru the city I perceived two suspicious characters spying on me from a distance. For this reason I hid all my money and jewelry that evening with special precaution, for I was ready for everything.

Indeed, about two o'clock that night a powerful knock thundered at my door. "Who is there?" I asked. "The Extraordinary Commission" came in reply. I was forced to open. Half an hour later I was at the late Municipal Headquarters, now occupied by the "Extraordinary Commission".

Upon my query for the reason of my arrest, I was given the cold reply, "As American officer and spy." They were all aware that I was neither. But what could I do?

Six and a half weeks I spent in an underground dungeon, subsisting on two ounces of bread and a can of water a day. The sword constantly hung over my head. Each day saw some of my fellow-prisoners spirited away—and they were never seen again.

Nevertheless, through the neverfailing medium of a considerable amount of money, I managed to buy my freedom. The end of December found me in Stockholm. Fancy my elation when I did find myself able to breathe freely without the fear of death. Also I could eat as much as I wished. Yet my joy was sadly incomplete, for far, far, in that cold land

of Russia, surrounded by the red maniacs, were left my wife and my adorable four-year-old boy George. Only God Almighty knows what has befallen them in the long months since last I saw them. Are they even Alive?

Oh, if I could only bring Bolshevism home to you as it has been brought home to me. It is so hard for those in civilized countries to picture it even in a general way. Could you imagine New York in ruins, its great white way littered with dead horses; all restaurants, gilded lobster palaces, theatres closed? This description may seem exaggerated to some of you, but I have seen this state of affairs in Petrograd—the New York of Russia—and let me tell you that it was really very tragic.

Five-six years ago Petrograd was one of the liveliest cities in Europe. Her streets were bustling with activity. Her homes, shops, theatres, and restaurants were brilliant with life, gaiety and excitement. Her people were happy in the day's work and play.

Today this great metropolis is barren as a desert. There is no trace of her former glory. Her restaurants and theatres are the grimy barracks of a lunatic army. Instead of the sweet strains of music are heard the roar of cannon and the staccato barks of machine guns. People are impoverished and hungry. Children die before their birth or afterwards on their mothers' fallen bosoms. Not only do people drop from exhaustion but even the machines, factories and traffic halt for lack of energy. People are too busy cutting throats to cut wood for fires.

Nevsky Prospect, once the Fifth Avenue of Petrograd, whose fair pedestrians compared with the fairest on the Avenue de l'Opera, or Picadilly, whose granite pavements were models of cleanliness, is no more. Now these walks are littered with rubbish, and commonest frequenters are dead horses, whose pestilential odors are rife with diseases—horses which disappear at night in a mysterious manner, that is mysterious to him who has not felt hunger.

I have seen the famished figures creep forth at night, knife in hand, to prey on this God-Sent carrion. Providence is kind and illumination is absent; no one will interfere. He who is first upon the scene claims the choicest morsel, and what cares he if its nourishment is infectious? Or if he even must cross daggers for his fatal morsel?

I have seen mothers and daughters creeping forth sometimes in twilight to appease their hunger on raw horse flesh. My wife saw one such sight that prostrated her. When I finally revived her, the horse and its famished guests had entirely disappeared—it all happened in a few minutes.

CATEGORIES.

Not all classes have to fight over carrion; there are some people who are thriving comparatively well. These are the fortunate those of the "first category". The population in Russia is divided by the Bolsheviks into four categories.

The first category is made up of those who are doing hard work for the Government. Soldiers are included in this class and workers in Government factories. The Bolshevik Government tries to take good care of its army, and in great measure succeeds. Members of the first category are allowed half a pound of bread a day, and they can buy it at the Soviet shops at a comparatively reasonable rate. The second category consists of clerical workers, servants and the like whether in the employ of the Government or of private persons. Each member of this class is allowed a quarter of a pound of bread a day, at the same price.

The third class is made up of such people as the widows of officers and members of the nobility who are living on pensions or private incomes. The widow of a General, for example, gets a pension of 1000 rubles a month, but that is only worth about two dollars actual purchasing power in Russia now. These people are allowed sometimes as often as once a week, but rarely with such frequency either one eighth or one-sixteenth of a pound of bread, a pound or half pound of potatoes.

The fourth category consists of the proprietors of little shops and factories. Their weekly food al-

lowance is two herrings—no bread or vegetables at all. Their tools have been taken from them, they have no materials to work with, but, if they have employed people, they must continue paying their wages. The last two classes have no rights, whatever; in Moscow they cannot even ride in the street cars.

All the food that few fortunates get in addition to their allowance must be purchased at such exorbitant prices that can hardly be conceived in a country where people cry about the H. C. of L. when bread costs only 9c a pound.

Here are some quotations current in Petrograd:
Rubles.

Bread, black, corn, per pound	200 to 300
Potatoes, unwashed, per pound	60 to 100
Butter, or fat, per pound	500 to 800
Apples, each	50 to 100
Horse meat, per pound	250 to 400

If you imagine that these articles of food can be bought in the open market, you are mistaken. Only in silent by-streets under the hidden cloak can they be bought, and woe to the buyer if caught in the act by the Red Guard. If said authority merely confiscates the food, the buyer can be happy, for he might have been led off to a place of repentance for a long period of meditation.

A familiar scene is as follows: You are passing the market place, when a moderately intelligent looking being approaches you and confidentially hints of a small loaf hid under his coat. Hungrilly you halt him and clinch the bargain. A sad looking civilian comes out from behind, a shrill whistle and suddenly about you rise, as from under the ground,

a score of Red Guards ready to shoot you at the least motion. In a second you are standing before the Soviet Commissar.

Folk-kitchens have replaced the restaurants. As private purchase of food is forbidden, citizens are compelled to resort to the public bread line, often waiting for hours with their meal tickets for their day ration of a slice of bread.

The public kitchen affords a dish of hot water and dirty cabbage, potato or strong smelling fish for more or less a reasonable price. It is indeed a pleasure to enjoy this after waiting in line thru zero weather for five, or six hours in company with thieves and beggars. But to have the privilege of eating in these kitchens, one must belong to the first two categories.

SOVIETS.

In Petrograd, Moscow, Kiev, and other big cities councils—or soviets—were formed by these new rulers of all Russia. These councils were assemblies, or parliaments, comprised of delegates supposedly chosen by soldiers, workingmen, and peasants to represent them. These delegates were sent from the smaller localities to act in a higher center, and so on.

The peasants were very conscientious in their election of representatives. They chose spokesmen of undoubted character, as a rule, to champion the needs of the rural electorate with honest vigor. But such spokesmen no sooner arrived at the higher center than they were submitted to scrutiny by the presiding officer of the soviet with a view of ascertaining their sympathies toward Bolshevism. Woe betide them if the examination indicated a lack of sympathy, for the lot of the so-called counter-revolutionist, or “enemy of the people,” is unenviable.

The councils were in this manner stuffed to the brim with honest-to-goodness Bolsheviks whose personal interest gained in precedence during their “legislation,” which was ostensibly intended to promote the welfare of the populace.

Lenine’s first decree compelled all Russian landowners to surrender their possessions to the rightful rulers of the soil—the peasants.

When this transfer of land rights had been consummated, the peasants, naturally, awaited the bestowal of these lands upon them by the soviets. Had not this property been confiscated in their name? Indeed yes; but, in spite of this fact, the soviets did not revert these lands to the peasants gratis.

For an exorbitant price that almost doubled that asked for by the former landholders the soviets offered this confiscated property to the peasants—poor deluded “rightful rulers of the soil!” Thus arose the first clash between the peasants and their soviet “representatives.”

The peasant now realized that he had been swindled and began to protest. But of what avail was the plaint of a common boor against an array of bayonets?

The moujik was forced to acquiesce meekly in this fiasco, for he was in dire need of soil, in need of bread. True, not all of the bread he produced belonged to him. For while he could toil from sunrise to sunset on his soil, its growth belonged to the communistic soviet. The laboring food-grower could consume only his one pound of bread per diem; the distribution of the rest was in the hands of the soviet agent. This procedure proved to be indigestible for the rustic understanding.

The difficulties of crop-raising in the recent season have been enormous. In addition to the extortionate cost of land, the peasant found himself confronted with the lack of tools. Russia had failed in the last few years to promote the agricultural implement industry; import has been impossible; and the peasant resorted perforce to primitive methods.

I know cases where farmers actually fashioned plowshares from wood and saplings. Since oxen and horses had been confiscated, it was only natural to span wife and daughter in the yoke (the son was probably killed in the war.) The minor implements were so rare that fifteen copeck (7½ cents) reaping hooks were sold for 200-250 rubles, scythes for 750-1250 rubles, each, and purchase of these was possible only under duress.

The proverbial patience of the moujik was consequently strained to the bursting point—and finally it burst! Then ensued a life-and-death struggle between peasant and soviet.

The Russian people have from time immemorial been accustomed to seek succor beneath the benevolent shadow of the Church. The clergy, mostly descended from rustic ancestry, now extended comfort to their suffering parishes and counseled them to evade these unjust "laws" of the soviets, to conceal their produce under ground, in the roof-thatching, etc. Soon the soviets became aware of this union between Church and peasant, and a terrible oppression of the priests resulted.

In the province of Kaluga, where my estate was located, a tragic episode occurred. The peasants, indignant at the exploitation of the soviet, organized an armed force, under the leadership of some abbots whose monastery was the rendezvous for defense. The local soviet, apprised of this "uprising," sent a band of several hundred armed Bolsheviks to overwhelm the monastery, but the attempt was unsuccessful. A hurry call for aid was sent to Moscow, one hundred miles away, and immediately the

higher soviet furnished an expedition of an entire regiment of Lettish mercenaries, accompanied by four armored cars and supply trains. These attacked the monastery at midnight, and before noon of the next day reduced the monastery, village, and entire surroundings to a heap of ashes. The few remaining monks were hung upon a few remaining door-posts. Scarcely anything was left undestroyed—even the produce for which this struggle was fought. For what use was bread when disobedience to Bolshevism was in question?

After this victory of Peremishl, as the village was called, a reign of terror was instituted against Church and clergy over the land.

The first victim was the kindly liberal sage Bishop Theophane, of the Caluga Province. This pious theologian, whose radical writings are renowned beyond the boundaries of his land, came from a noble lineage and was endowed with a great measure of academic and juridical learning. Being of a profoundly liberal temperament, he was persona non grata in the Czar's regime. Prior to the February revolution he had been ordered before the court on a charge of defending a deacon who in drunkenness committed an act of lese-majeste—having called the Czar a dunce-head. It was said that the Bishop claimed that his deacon had spoken in drunkenness what many thought in sobriety.

Such a figure of outspoken liberal tendencies was a victim of Lenine-Trotsky oppression. In the midst of night agents broke into the bishopric to search the possessions of the sleeping Churchman, to drag him to the soviet. His horses and carriage

were confiscated, his cow sequestered. The old man was a vegetarian—yet they left him not even the least nourishing edible. The soviet made his life impossible. Before I left Russia I heard a report that he had been mysteriously murdered.

Bishop Theophane is only one of Russia's clerical martyrs. Brutally have the sons of the Church been massacred and the monasteries despoiled. The treasures of ages have been shamefully torn from sacred relics and shared as booty by Bolshevik pilferers. Holy places have been transformed into stenching barracks; learned, dignified theologians have been thrust by means of blows and threats into the uniform of soviet soldiers. And the righteousness of Christ has departed from Russia forever? That is for the world to answer.

Who comprise the soviets, the actual rulers of the country? Mostly illiterate persons, unable to sign their names, and of high criminal pedigree. Their life creed was learned in prison and their training in the ways of robbery and murder.

When that great political charlatan Kerensky bethought himself to open the jails, a great many criminals were released who were clever enough to ally themselves with the Socialistic party. They were received with open arms. The impress of their chains on ankle and wrist were marks of honor.

But during the first Provisional Government, at the head of which stood such idealists as those of the Prince Lvoff Cabinet, these criminals had little opportunity to share in the government.

Only after October 21, 1917, when Lenin and Trotsky usurped power, these ex-murderers obtain-

ed their first chance to assert themselves. From the street-corner meetings of the Bolsheviks these ruffians learned to prate from Karl Marx. The reign of terror began with the imprisonment of the capitalist first, and then of any one else suspected of having property. Every house and club was raided. Twice was my purse the victim of socialization.

I remember one midnight raid upon our club. The doors were burst open. "In the name of the Revolution!" entered a host of Red Guards. They were specialists in their craft. They left not an article of value on the premises. They knew all the hiding-places.

This all occurs under the guise of authority. Factories, homes, shops, are daily confiscated—or "socialized"—under these self-same mandates.

In the midday a commissar enters your office and tells you that your office is to be surrendered to the Government. You do not protest, for if you do you are condemned as a counter-revolutionist. Until the last autumn the commissars were not so harsh in the case of your dwelling. They merely confiscated your rentals and luxuries, but allowed you to occupy your premises and pay rent to the soviet for your own property. But for the last few months, since they started their system of "equal distribution," you are not allowed to hold a room for yourself, but you are forced to quarter together with Red Guard families or homeless tramps. But if the Government needs your premises for their purposes you must vacate within twenty-four hours.

"Enough for the rich, now let the poor be supreme" is the new watchword.

A WEEK FOR THE POOR.

Zinovieff, the Governor of Petrograd, originated the beautiful idea of a Week of the Poor, a "Nedielia Biednoty," consisting of hundreds of robber bands which daily search all residences equipped with commissars' mandates, in order to take away what they can. If one has a new and old overcoat, one is left the old overcoat. If one has two pairs of old and three pairs of new underwear, one is left two pairs of old underwear. If one has two blankets, the better one is taken.

What such robbery means to the poor Russians can be understood from the following price scale:

Rubles.

Shoes, per pair	3,000-6,000
Overcoat	10,000-20,000
Suit	15,000-25,000
Socks, per pair	300- 600
Blankets	10,000-20,000

Now the brutality with which this horrible decree has been executed can scarcely be mentioned before a civilized public. Nevertheless, I cannot restrain myself from relating at least one tragic episode of the thousands occurred, and as I have reason to believe, are still very common in the Bolshevik republic.

As both the victim herself, a highly refined and cultured girl of twenty-one, and her aged aristocratic parents were very intimate friends of my family, I was most accurately informed about the horrible incident. It came to pass just a few days previously to my arrest, and the appalling details communicated to me by the unfortunate parents have added a great deal to my tortures during the endless weeks of imprisonment.

The christian name of this victim was Vera, her second name, for obvious reasons, I will change into Goremikin, and under this name will I try to narrate the horrible story.

VERA'S CASE.

The threat of such a decree had long hung over Russia, driving dire dread into the souls of all unfortunately called "bourgeois." The precise meaning of this new Soviet promulgation was clear exactly to none; the only thing certain was that this involved new oppression, new persecution. And hearts shuddered.

Rumor had it that Lenine himself did not consent to this declaration and that in his opinion it was indeed nearly time to call a halt, for everything that could be done to the hated capitalistic class had been done, and that an excess of vengeance would bring harm rather than good. For that reason, he was disinclined to permit this orgy to occur in Moscow, his capital. And if Lenine himself disapproved of a new step of persecution, this was certainly a sign of its intolerability. But the self-appointed rulers of the other provinces, such as Zinovieff in Petrograd and Vitolin in Kaluga, calculated that Bolshevism had attained such a stage that caution was no longer necessary. Therefore Zinovieff gave the first signal in Petrograd, and his action was followed in the majority of minor provinces throughout the country. Then began the carousal!

The alleged motive for the occasion was to provide warm blankets and warm clothing for paupers and the army.

Proletarian houses were to be exempted from search. Every raid was to be authorized officially. A special mandate was to be presented by every Red Guard before entering the premises to be investigated. The search must be made without dispatch and without brutality. No articles, not specifically mentioned in the mandate, were to be touched.

So stated the published decree. But its performance was of a different nature. Especially in the case of my friends, the Goremikins was this manifesto accorded a grim interpretation.

One afternoon, when Vera had returned from school and had hastened to greet her sick mother confined in a remote chamber, a sharp ring was heard at the door. Save mother and daughter, nobody was home. Old Dr. Goremikin had gone with Boris, their invalid son, to one of the hospitals where the physician was employed. Vera went to the door herself.

She thought it must be one of the patients calling, and therefore opened the portals without hesitation. Instead into the house walked two individuals of tall stature, with curled mustaches—authentic types of the former Czarist gendarmes. They were attired in ordinary Red Guard uniforms, but of superior material. Both were not much over twenty and far from ungainly. One of them, with a light gash over his brow, apparently the elder, courteously presented a document to Vera with the polite excuse:

“You appear to be the mistress of this residence. Therefore, will you please read this order? We are from the Committee on Poverty.”

The paper bore instruction to the effect that its bearers were empowered by authoritative decree to rummage through all wardrobe closets and cabinets and to confiscate for the need and use of the Soviet Republic what articles were found to be superfluous for the resident family.

Vera was young and confident. Therefore, she could not realize accurately the possible outcome of such instructions. She merely replied that she would inquire of her mother who was lying sick in her chamber. The officials exchanged glances furtively, and the scarred one, with a smirk, offered to escort her for, according to law, immediately upon presentation of the warrant, these premises were in lawful control. So Vera was forced to acquiesce.

The Goremikin house was built on the corridor or hotel plan in the form of an L; that is, there was a long corridor which turned to the right leading past the eleven rooms of the apartment. The ailing Madame Goremikin was sleeping in the last chamber at the toe of the L-foot. To reach her, it was necessary to pass all eleven doors looking into the narrow corridor. Elisavetha Dmitrovna, Vera's mother, who had become accustomed of late to all sorts of trouble was not astounded by this new disturbance. She told her daughter to show the "gentlemen" all their clothing closets. The official insisted at first, that Vera open the large old chest in the sick chamber. She complied. But other than summer frocks and lingerie, there was nothing. As they did not touch a single vestment, the women's fears were somewhat allayed. When the intruders had finished their search, the younger asked Miss Goremikin.

"How many persons are in your house?"

"Four, Father, mother, brother and I."

Where are the others?"

"In the Troyitsky Hospital," the mother responded, "my husband is the chief surgeon there."

"Ah!" said the questioner, and he glanced significantly at his colleague. The other apparently comprehended, for a satisfied grin spread over his features. But his wink and smile were unnoticed by the women. Perhaps, if they had observed it, they might have been more cautious in their replies. The elder official hastily exclaimed:

"Well, why are we dilly-dallying? We must see the other rooms. We've plenty to do today. Excuse us, kindly, for this interruption. Believe me, it is not in our power to do otherwise. We are compelled to make this search."

These last words of apology set the misgivings of the women entirely to rest. Only when they departed from the invalid's room and locked the door from the outer side, as a "legal precaution," was Vera for a moment uneasy. But the feigned affability of their tones quickly soothed her into a delusion of safety.

"We shall commence with the room nearest the entrance," declared the elder official. "Whose is it, barishnia."

"Mine," the girl informed him innocently.

The long row of white doors flitted past them until they arrived at their destination. As they entered, the younger man quickly turned the key in the door, again as a "legal precaution."

Vera's boudoir was done entirely in white. The walls were papered white, and the ceiling calcimined in white. The furniture was white-painted and the bed of a spotless white. Even the mouldings of the portraits were white. All this in addition to the white canopy which hung from the ceiling over the white bed imparted to the room an air of remarkable cleanliness.

The two inquisitors, as they passed the threshold of this immaculate bed-chamber, for a moment appeared abashed. Perhaps in the depths of their souls throbbed a nerve of their former consciences. Perhaps in this very moment their thoughts flashed back to their young, guiltless sisters, somewhere in a remote village from which, undoubtedly, the two men came. Who knows? But this human impulse swayed them only a brief second before an animal gleam flickered in their eyes as they proceeded to their appointed task. The elder ordered the girl to open the white wardrobe which was standing between the bed and the window. Here, as in Madame Goremikin's room they could discover nought else but flimsy blouses, corsets, and mysterious maidenly knick-knacks of airy cambric, linen, and silk. The same findings resulted from the carved chest standing opposite. The younger of the pair, guarding the door, observed a gilded powder-case on Vera's toilet dresser, which he stealthily slipped into this pocket. Neither was the same fate avoided by the gold miniature suspended over the dresser mirror. But no other extraordinary dexterity was as yet shown by the intruders. It almost seemed as if they were leisurely engaged on mere preliminaries, and that

their chief object was still ahead of them. And in fact, they soon diverted themselves to the main task. The older critically studied the silk pique cover spread over the bed and felt its inner contents with his hand. He was on the point of lifting the coverlet, reconsidered and requested Vera to do so.

Vera neared her bed with downcast head. Tears sprang into her eyes. Until now none had ever dared to approach her virgin couch. None had ever seen it in any but orderly array. And now she must lift the white coverlet before an impudent masculine gaze. But what else could she do? Protests would not avail in this instance. She was too obviously entirely in their power. Why, why had she not at least her mother with her? Suddenly a terrible thought struck her dumb. Why had they closed her mother's door from the outer side? They must have had some dreadful aim in view. But what? Vera's mind refused to go further.

She was now standing between the uncovered bed and the elder official. Her tender full figure was leaning against the silvered posts, her hand resting on the top cushion. Slowly she raised her tearful pleading eyes to the two ransackers. Only an insolent suspicious smile, no spark of human feeling, was the answer. The girl was beginning to remove the cushions, fresh and soft as herself. But the official did not permit her.

"Don't bother, barishnia, the cushions can remain. We wish only to examine the warm blankets."

From Vera's heart a heavy stone seemed to be lifted. She would not have to reveal her virgin bed

after all before the gaze of these insolent men. She lifted a corner of her coverlet very slightly.

"You see, sirs, under this pique spread, there is a single warm satin cover, only one."

The older searcher bent to touch the cover with his fingers, and then with a sudden dash of lightning speed he clasped Vera around the waist and was showering her with sensuous smacks.

For a moment Vera was breathless. The kisses had not only sealed her lips but had even halted her life-energy. She had never been embraced like this by a stranger before. But Vera was a daughter of the Goremikin family, with whom courage and self-reliance are strongly characteristic. She did not yell or scream for her mother as another girl in her place might have done. She was aware that her invalid mother was confined in the eleventh chamber on the other corridor and could not hear her, and even if she could have heard, would have been unable to aid—the rascals had locked her in securely enough. Therefore, as soon as she recovered from her first bewilderment, she hurled the weight of her body against her assailant, and the unwelcome lover staggered back to the end of the room. At the same moment, the other brute sprang to her and without a word began thrusting her onto the bed. Then the repulsed one returned and with a snarl flung himself upon his rival. But the younger did not lose himself. Without releasing his victim from his mighty grasp, he cried to his comrade:

"Get out, you greedy dog! Why should you always get the first snack? Weren't you first yesterday at the Sokoloffs? And that time at the Mur-

aviovffs? No, you watch the door this time and let me be first!"

The other, growling fiercely, assented to his opponent's argument.

The girl, now recovering her consciousness, endeavored to free herself from this second brutal attack, but the moujik's grip was strong as iron. She couldn't so much as turn an inch. When she realized that resistance was in vain, she humbled her pride and began pleading.

"What will you gain by making such a helpless being as myself unhappy? I have an old father who can hardly bear himself up on his feet. And my mother you have already seen. What you wish to do will surely bring them into the grave. You do not look like professional murderers. On your faces I see a noble spirit. You must have mothers and sisters. Oh, let me be, and I will give you all the jewelry still left to me."

And with her free hand she tore a golden cross hung by a platinum chain from her neck, placing it on the shoulder of her aggressor. He seized it ravenously, but hugged her maiden bosom closer to his rough breast. His heart was untouched. Vera begged perseveringly:

"On that arm you are crushing so painfully I have a platinum watch set with diamonds. Take it, but please let me be free."

The other man approached and unlocked the platinum bracelet, but Vera was not released. Then she was obsessed with raging fury. With her free hand she pinched and scratched the visage of her torturer. Her sharp teeth sank into his thick shoulder. In a wild outburst, she screamed:

“Murder! Rape! Robbery! O help! Help!
Mother! Father!”

But none heard her. None could help her. The enraged brute, intoxicated by feminine proximity and distressed by the sharp pain in his face and shoulders, finally in a blind madness began to rend her clothes to pieces, and at her first least struggle he struck her mercilessly with his clenched fists. The brute!

Footsteps approached the hall door. A clumsy clatter of keys, and the old Dr. Goremikin entered the ante-room. A press on the electric button, and there was light. To the left stood Vera's door ajar. But within was darkness and the physician paid no attention. He hurried through the long corridor to his wife's chamber. But surprise spread over his features as he found the door firmly locked.

“Liza,” he shouted, “why did you lock yourself in?”

And a weak voice replied:

“Oh, Leo, open the door from your side. Come in quickly. Where is Vera?”

The old doctor saw quickly that the key was inserted from the outer side. He turned it and in an instant he was beside his wife.

“What did you say about Vera?” he cried in terror. “Where is she?”

The old mother stammered in confusion.

“Two men were here—from the Committee on Poverty—Vera was with them. Run to her room.”

“But Verotchka's room is dark!” exclaimed her husband.

"Dark?" echoed the mother insanely. In her nightrobe she sprang bare-footed to the floor and with a desperate effort she ran through the corridor, followed by her aged husband. Her motherly instinct forebode evil of what she would find in her daughter's room and she strained madly to be first there. And as soon as she lighted the chamber, all was clear to her.

Vera was prone in unconsciousness. Her splendid rosy figure, erstwhile so saintly in its purity, was now violently besmirched. Covered with bruises and blood-stains, she lay motionless on her bed, deflowered.

Her two assailants, sated and with pockets snugly filled, had long absconded. In the room now reigned an ominous stillness. The air was filled with a heavy breathing and perspiration, but not a sound floated in from anywhere. Even the girl's alarm clock had been carried away with the other trinkets.

Most remarkable of all, the poor mother did not lose her presence of mind. She hastily closed the door.

"Wait, wait a while!" she cried to her husband, while she carefully spread a cover over the defloration of her daughter. Only when she had gathered up the tattered remains of Vera's apparel from the floor, and had thrust them under the couch, did she admit the distracted father into the scene of the tragedy.

Dr. Goremikin was a veteran practitioner. His eyes had seen many happenings in the course of his lifetime, especially during the last few years

of Russia's ruin. With drooping head he advanced toward his only daughter and felt her pulse. His face was expressionless. When finally he placed his ear to the girl's breast, he pronounced to his wife:

"She still lives." But no sign of joy was visible in his rigid countenance. He merely added a further instruction, "See that Boris knows nothing. This would kill him entirely. An accident at school —that's all."

SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS.

Things are going very badly with professional people in Russia. The plight of the public school teachers is sad indeed, and the situation in regard to the schools is very curious. I know a great deal about this at first hand because two of my wife's sisters are teachers and I have friends who are teachers, some of the teachers who were killed on the day when the Constituent Assembly was called were women whom I knew. On that morning some teachers went on the Petrograd streets with banners applauding the Constituent Assembly, and they were shot at from the roofs and forty were killed.

The schools are suffering because they have no paper, no ink, none of the materials needed—most of all, no books. The lack of books is due to more than one cause. When the Bolsheviks started to change everything, they decided that they would change the Russian alphabet and grammar and make them easier. So they first took away three of the thirty-six characters in the alphabet. Two of those were useless enough, but the elimination of the third one, the "i," causes a good deal of confusion. Then they made "simplifications" in the grammar and spelling, and they made a rule that no one should publish books written according to the old ways. But they couldn't get books printed the new way. All the teachers had was a sheet of paper with the new Bolshevik grammar and spelling rules; so everything was at a standstill.

They decreed that all teachers should have a two months' course in learning the new rules; but then the teachers said, "What about the children? Shall we require them to use the new methods when we haven't any books?" Then it was decided that for the first year the children might use the old grammar and spelling while they were trying to learn the new, so now things are every which way, as you can imagine. Otherwise I think the schools would probably be better than they were under the Czar. The public schools were very poor then.

The real plight of the teachers, however, is not concerned with books, but with food. A public school teacher gets a salary of five thousand rubles (\$40-\$50) a month and belongs to the second category in the population. She works from nine in the morning until three to five in the afternoon, and she can't live on a quarter of a pound of bread and perhaps a few potatoes. If a teacher is to be sufficiently nourished to go on with her work, she must have more food and it will cost her on an average of about 1,500 rubles a day. Many of these young women, too, are trying to support their mothers or other relatives. I know one very lovely young teacher, a member of a family to which Lermontov, the poet, belonged; who is trying to keep herself, her old mother, and a sick sister alive on her scanty salary. In the school where she is there were one hundred and ten teachers last year; now there are sixty. And I think most of those who are gone literally starved to death; the rest went on the streets.

A touch of irony in the teacher's situation lies in the fact that the Bolsheviks do try to keep the

school-children well fed, and that the teachers, who are often literally starving themselves, must dole out food to the children each day!

But the instruction of about an hundred pupils in the unheated class-rooms does not entirely satisfy the greedy Soviet employer; further and still heavier tasks are forced upon the famished teacher. Home work.

You all have undoubtedly heard about **COMPULSORY LABOR**. But its sinister meaning can be clear only to an eye-witness. Imagine your wives or your daughters, after a hard day's work at the office, shops, factory or school, to begin in the evenings in a half-starving state, another couple hours of still harder toil.. This is the case, to a much greater degree, with the Russian school-dame.

The Bolshevik municipality tries to keep her cities, gardens and barracks more or less clean, but is loath to hire special people for this purpose. Therefore you can often see the bent backs of the aged men (the young are all driven to the fighting lines), mingled with the frail, emaciated figures of young women, engaged in sweeping the streets, shoveling snow from the sidewalks or washing the filthy floors of the stenching barracks under the rigid supervision of red brutes.

One winter evening, when I called on my friend, a young school teacher, I found her on the street, in company of a number of other gentlewomen, shovel in hand, bent upon the task of heaping masses of accumulated snow into one huge pile, while a red guard giant, with a cigarette in his mouth, cried out his rigorous orders:

"Lively there, lively, you cursed bourgeoisie! Been idle enough—now work!" And the weak women kept on working, not daring to lift even their heads for a moment. The frost was nipping faces pitilessly, paralyzing hands and feet. One could have seen how the last atoms of strength was departing from these women. They could not even stand erect. But the red foreman went on shouting: "Hurry up! Quicker now!"

I ran to my friend and wrenched the shovel from her numbed grasp. "No, no!" she protested, upturning a wearied face on which tears and perspiration had frozen bead-like. "My time is yet not due," and with these words she fell prone upon the snow. She was still conscious but completely exhausted. The two hours of exposure in the penetrating frost and the untold days of hunger had exhausted her entire strength. I had to lift her in my arms and to carry her to her apartment.

UNIVERSITIES AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTIONS.

If the conditions in Russian elementary and secondary schools are peculiar, those of the universities and technical institutions are even stranger. In the first place, most of the colleges and higher technical schools are closed. The two surviving institutions in Petrograd and Moscow are merely half functioning and have become—I know not what.

It must not be forgotten that in former years the Russian schools of higher learning were of premier rank. It was more difficult for one to enter a Russian university or technical school than presumably for a Bolshevik to gain access to the heavenly kingdom. The privilege of university study was possessed only by certain classes, and this only after a certain degree of maturity had been attained as the result of an eight-year course in the "gymnasium," or high school. Eligible entrants were ordinarily Russian in a restricted sense; as the Jews, for instance, could qualify for entrance only if gold medal winners in the aforementioned courses, and the number of even these medalists was restricted to one or two per cent. Thus was the sanctum sanctorum, the Russian university, almost impregnable. Indeed, during the last few years before the war, when Casso was Minister of Education, Jews were entirely prohibited from the benefits of higher learning. But credit must indeed be given to the Russian university; its students were the most truly cultured in the world.

When Czardom tottered and its Ministers were placed behind the bars of the Peter and Paul Fortress, the new Provisional Government made its natural step; it put aside all barriers and opened the universities to all qualified candidates, Christians or dissenters. Of course the ten existing Russian universities were immediately crowded to the point of congestion and it was found necessary to found new universities in different parts of the vast country. The masses, hungry for knowledge, enjoyed their full.

The Bolsheviks, usurping power, found this condition not sufficiently to their liking. They desired to "proletariatize" the Russian school of higher learning. Lunatcharsky, the Soviet Minister of Education, decreed that the eight-year curriculum of the secondary school be annulled. Examinations, requirements, etc., were all nil. Even academic credit for examinations previously passed was robbed of recognition. The new class of "students," often unable to write or read a line fairly accurately, was given the same rights as were accorded the really educated student of former days. The Russian world of scholarship, as of politics, became quickly infested with released jailbirds and deserters anxious to exchange their gray prison caps for blue students' hats. In a short time the genuine student found himself in an embarrassed position, for the newcomer abused him as one of lofty noble caste, and the former was even forced to abandon the walks of his beloved Alma Mater, whose shelter he had won only after arduous trials.

The professors at first protested, but Lenine replied to them curtly; if they would desert their chairs, they would be classed as saboteurs, in which event their salaries and food tickets would be withheld. If, however, the professors would yield to Lenine's programme, they would be placed in the "first category" and their salaries made the highest in the land.

What could the poor pedants do? Naturally, they yielded.

Imagine now the conditions existent in the revered Russian university.

HUNGER-MIGRATION.

When bread became so scarce in the central provinces that even the peasants could not obtain it at any price, however exorbitant the eyes of the masses turned to the Ukraine and Siberia for relief.

These fertile provinces had always fed central Russia in time of need. But since Kerensky's regime these had been declared "independent sovereignties." Access to them has become impossible. The All-Russian railway system has collapsed. Passenger service is nil save for Delegates--trains of two or three first-class carriages reserved for Bolshevik "representatives." Often cattle trains can be seen containing confiscated horses, cows, etc. And in this last mode of conveyance the peasants have managed their long journey to the distant fertile provinces in quest of bread.

The travel to the Ukraine, say from Moscow, normally eighteen to twenty hours in duration, now occupies five or six weeks. But when one has enough courage, patience and some money one can overcome this obstacle. Partly by cattle train, partly by wagon mostly on foot, one can ultimately scrape one's way to the outer provinces of plenty, to the God-blessed Ukraine, where bread and potatoes are plentiful and where they can be sold by the peasant owner to whomever and for whatever he pleases.

Lenine's agents gradually detected this secret hunger migration. Warning was immediately sent broadcast that returning "passengers" found in cattle trains with contraband food in possession would have it confiscated. A vigilant border inspection ensued. Peasants driven beyond the border for

bread and anxious to return to their hungry families on the precious soviet soil met these Bolshevik guards with vehement opposition. The feud waxed in terror. Armed caravansaries of peasants, several hundred strong, set out in armed defiance. Finally a vast avalanche of bread slaughter swept over Russia, until the communistic authorities saw the futility of it all and compromised by allowing a bi-weekly passage to every citizen supplied with about forty pounds of grain. The bread feuds somewhat abated.

But worse calamity has arisen. The agricultural populations of Siberia and the Ukraine had formerly been greatly dependent on the factories of central Russia for clothing and shoes. Now this supply of manufactured commodities had ceased. Meanwhile their own supply of food was being depleted by the Germans, their new protectors. So they began voicing a genuine demand for these manufactured articles, finally decreeing that no foodstuffs were to be allowed into central Russia unless accompanied with an exchange of linen, leather, etc. But where could the poor Russian peasants obtain these finished commodities? Whatever was in sight had already been confiscated by the Bolsheviks.

Helpless, defrauded peasants, deluded "beneficiaries" of the Revolution, ground like their own chaff between the mill-stones of the gods! Is it any wonder they start to cry out in despair for their Czar of old, who, though a despot, protected them from robbery and murder?

THE PLIGHT OF ARISTOCRACY.

Before the markets in the big cities were closed (they were closed in Nov. 1918.) the sight was common of an aristocratic lady, vestments in hand, abused by a rough soldier for demanding a high price for her wares. Since November 1 such scenes have deteriorated to worse.

As is well known, most of the aristocracy in Russia were in the military service. The first assault of the Bolsheviks was therefore on the "military caste."

The plight of the dependents of this class, bereft of defenders and fortune, is beyond conception. They cannot even sell papers. Suicides have been common; hunger deaths even more common. Some have gone upon the streets. Often can be seen the frail, refined figure of a former noblewoman wending her way along the Nevsky Prospect in the midst of rain and cold in the pursuit of bread for her children.

I was accosted by one such figure and recalled the voice; it was the well-known baroness whose hospitable Fridays were long ago known all over Russia; indeed, she was a close friend of the Imperial household, and her husband died among the first days of the war on the battlefield with Archduke Oleg Konstantinovitch. She saw that I recognized her, and the moment was painful.

WHAT CAN BE DONE FOR RUSSIA.

Whenever I happen to talk on Bolshevism, I am confronted by the question: "Ought the world to interfere in Russian internal affairs? A problematic query, I admit. But having the knowledge of the Russian situation even from Bolshevik point of view I could answer without hesitation. It ought not, but it must. For the Russian tragedy is international. It is the epidemic of the world. Yes, intervention must come and come immediately. For it is most dangerous when the enemy becomes confident of his forces. And the Bolsheviks are more than confident, they are certain of their victory. It also must not be forgotten that the Soviets have gathered most wonderfully in the past three years an army of over three million men, an army which is young, powerful and enthusiastic. These are fanatics who have no concern for their personal lives, regarding death merely a sacrifice for the sake of humanity. From this we can see that the terrible, brutal and impractical Bolshevism, is transformed by these fanatics into a new religion. A creed for the International Proletariate.—

We know how harmful is such religious belief, but the half developed workingman who has more faith than knowledge, does not know. He believes. And in this lies the greatest danger; for faith and

fanaticism go, in such cases, hand in hand. In short, Bolshevism is a religious sect whose chief prophets are Lenine and Trotzky, and whose principal ideal as we have already seen, is Destruction.

Like all sectarian movements, Bolshevism is quite infectious. With gigantic steps it is striding the world. Today there is no country but shelters a nest of this sickly sect. And this is only after two years of its existence in the Far North.

But most surprising is the fact of the world's indifference to this danger. One could often hear: "That what is happening in Russia can never happen here." It might sound ridiculous were it not so tragic. For this naive self-assurance was the very cause that brought the Allies to the present shameful negotiations with the Lenine-Trotzky government. The Bolshevik danger was already so evident that the Entente could not help seeing it.

Oh, if only the eyes of the Nations were open at least one year ago as wide as they are open now. They would not have to feel so desperate and forlorn as they now feel. The world would perhaps by now have settled in peace, instead of partaking in one of the fiercest battles ever fought by brother against brother. The lives of millions might have been spared, countless cities, towns and villages would remain undestroyed, billions of dollars not exchanged into valueless paper, destructive powder and bullets, and the deeds of Cain considerably diminished. For, despite the slight differences in their religious traditions, Russia and Poland are children of one mother—Slavia, who speak nearly the same language, have many like customs and breathe the

very same air. And to think that merely one hundred thousand men sent in time, could have not only prevented this bloody struggle but possibly brought an end to the entire Bolshevik movement. But this had to be done a year ago. Now, there is no time for such means. The opportunity is lost. For while the Allies were busy in creating various optimistic dreams, the Bolshevik Menace kept on advancing. It did its work slowly but surely. But altho the situation is very acute it is yet not fatal. One remedy is still left. This is the final lifting of the preposterous blockade at any cost.

For as long as the Bolsheviki are left isolated from the entire world and there is none to call a halt to their atrocities, they will continue to wreck their lust upon the helpless Russian people, until there will remain none but Bolsheviki.

The unprotected Russians will be left the choice either to join the Bolshevik ranks or to die.

But with the blockade lifted, and a window opened to the world at wide, a new stream of hope must fill the exhausted Russian souls. Then, with the kindly help of the Allied nations, Russia may probably shake off the heavy burden of her hateful oppressors. For you must not forget that Russia is a nation of almost two hundred millions! and the Bolsheviki, disregarding their boasting of being in the majority, are a mere minority of scarcely one-fifth, most of whom are even not Russians.

But Russia is starving. And a starving body can by no means keep up a living spirit. Therefore the first step necessary—is to bring in enough food to revive the emaciated bodies of the Russian popu-

lation. And as there are no other means at present to treat with Russia than through the recognition of the Bolsheviki, well then we must recognize them **TEMPORARILY**. But immediately. And the rest—the rest we can leave to the Russians themselves. When the exhausted body of the nation will be strengthened by food, the great Russian spirit will surely recover its wonted vigor—then woe to the intruders. For Bolshevism—as Lenine himself had admitted, has been derived from hunger and it can thrive only in the shadow of Starvation. Remove hunger and Bolshevism must perish in a natural way. Under normal conditions there can be no ground for this social parasite.

There is also nothing to fear for the progress of Bolshevism when through recognition of the Soviet Government, its real features will be exposed to the open world. Bolshevism attracts the masses only because it remains a mystery, because Lenine's agents are depicting it before their unenlightened audiences in heavenly colors.

But when Bolshevism will be brought home to foreign workers in the very same form as it has been brought home to the Russian population—with all its brutal and selfish details—then the masses will realize that they were deluded, as the Russian multitude is now realizing it, then together with their comrades of the north they will try to forsake the very thought of this sham-ideal **BOLSHEVISM**.

THE BLOCKADE.

For over three years more than a hundred million Russian souls are weltering in blood and famine behind the gory barrier of the Bolsheviks. Their agonized appeal: "Lift the blockade!" was heard all over the world. The death cry of millions of women and children, the cry for bread and clothing, reached many ears of the allied chiefs, but they pretended not to hear it. And no relief came.

There were many good spokesmen outside the red walls of Bolshevik Russia. In a thousand different ways they expressed the very same idea: "Russia can be saved only through the lifting of this inhuman blockade." But the Russian champions abroad succeeded no more than the Russians themselves within their seclusion.

There was one semi-sane voice among the entire herd of blockaders, and this was Lloyd-George's. His practical eye foresaw the sad outcome of this blockading system. He even predicted openly that if the Lenin party be left uncontrolled behind the barriers of the blockade the Bolsheviks will gain their victory. And as we can see, the British Premier was right. But....but France was then "in fashion", and whatever France's leader, the ex-anarchist Clemenceau, said was a law to everybody. Only now, when the infatuation with this "hero" is over, and when the victory of the Bolshevik forces

is no more doubtful, the entente decided to start negotiations with the Bolsheviki. But to what end will the present treaties bring, will be seen when we'll cast a further glance behind the red barrier.

First of all, how do the Bolsheviki accumulate so much strength that it enables them not only to proceed in their own Cain job, but also to lend their destructive power to millions of their associates all over the world? The upheavals in Germany and Austro-Hungary, the revolts in England, France, Italy and even America's own steel, harbor and railroad strikes have long ceased to be economic as pretended, but are of a strict political, or rather, Bolshevikistic character.

The wholesale arrests of radicals which has taken place within the first part of this year have fairly unmasked the real features of these mutinies. There can be no doubt whatsoever that the hot, poisonous breath of the Russian red monster has already infected the pure air of our republic. And the progressive victory of the Russian Reds over the allied forces on all fronts had shown that the Bolshevik power is growing, not daily, but hourly.

Now, where lies the source of their power? Who helps them to gain their brutal victories? I know it will appear incredible to you when I'll tell you—the allies. Yes, the allies with their dreadful blockading system.

This can be easily verified by showing some illuminating facts, which I have witnessed in my sojourn under the rule of the Bolsheviki. I have watched the birth and growth of their main support—the Red Army. I have seen hundreds of my

friends and acquaintances, loyal and devoted constitutionalists and even monarchists, joining the ranks of the Bolsheviki. Their views had not been altered a whit; as they were, so they remained—loyal to their old creeds and traditions. But the Bolshevik melting pot spared no personal opinion in its terrific fusion, for having no ideal depth of their own, how could it accommodate the profound, pure alloy of others? The Bolsheviki were possessed of one purpose—to found an army of three millions.

To achieve this goal they employ a simple, but most effective, method. If they know that in this or that house dwell one or more men capable of service in the Red Army they order the House Committee to inform these men that they shall present themselves immediately at certain mobilization quarters. If the person summoned is anti-Bolshevist in sentiment, which is often the case, and fails to appear, none seems to notice the fact. But when his family or himself comes for the monthly meal card, the secretary of the House Committee demands the recruiting card in exchange. No card, no food for the entire family! Naturally the alternative is either starvation or recruitment. And the Red army increases from month to month, and the Bolshevik state of affairs proceeds truly on greased wheels.

But the gigantic growth of the Red Army must be attributed to the kindly efforts of the allied entente. Yes, indeed, England, France, and also America are participating actively in this good work. This is the conviction of scores of millions of Russian inhabitants, including the entire Bol-

shevik military staff, scattered everywhere. This horrible blockade which is strangling the throats of millions of Russian children and women, is the chief impetus for the rise of the manifold Soviet forces.

This "economic blockade" has proved to be a success—for Bolshevism. Those who sought thereby to effect an end to the Red regime have found themselves in error. Their attempt has only attested their utter ignorance of conditions as existent in present-day Russia. For if they were better versed in the Bolshevik slogan, "Bolshevism at any price!" they would not so easily have yielded this terrible weapon—starvation—into the active hand of the Soviet champions.

Possibly the allied entente was forgetful of the fact that those calling themselves Bolsheviki and really constituting as I said but a sixth or the highest—one-fifth of the population of 100,000,000 souls in central Russia, were little effected by the grim results of the blockade. This minority has monopolized all necessities of life.

Disregarding all else, Russia, it must be admitted, is an agricultural country of great wealth. These Bolsheviki, now holding the upper hand, are constantly confiscating all commodities of primal necessity for their own barns and warehouses. By means of these reserves they maintain their army and other adherents. To the populace they merely dictate: "You are against us—die!"

In this solitary respect, the Russian multitude is most obedient—especially the little children and the frail women; they die! They die by the thousands day after day. And those men who do not

yet wish to die can face no other recourse than to join the Red army. And therein lies the secret for the rapid expanse of the Bolshevik fighting forces. At the begininng of 1918 the Bolsheviki could muster a mere handful of tattered vagabonds; and now they may boast of a standing army of about three millions.

Did the Bolsheviki create this army? No, without the kindly aid of the allies they never could have accomplished this feat. It is due to the wonderful achievement of the blockade! Or, to say better, of the intolerable hunger resulting from the blockade. And the Soviet authorities understand this quite well, and in the depths of their egotistic souls they scoff at the short-sighted blockaders. Perhaps, too, they thank them.

No power in the world can so enslave human nature as hunger. In the international army of criminals, it may be claimed that the vast majority of them were first driven to their illicit pursuit—especially to thievery—by the pang of starvation. Often these unfortunates robbed for themselves—oftimes for their intimates, for their children, parents, little brothers and sisters. The same is with regard to the Red army. Witnessing every day how their dearest one—wife or child—falls in the street like crumbless flies or insects; knowing full well that there is no other source of life anywhere in Russia; feeling their own strength gradually ebbing away, the men in everyday Russia can face no other path out of their dilemma but to &vow allegiance to the ranks of the Red freebooters.. For, as soon as they

are in a position to display their respective recruiting cards, they are sure that the wolf is kept at a safe distance from their homes, and their dearest ones are spared the tragic end of starvation. And the Red soldier himself? He risked nothing but his own life. And even this chance was slight, for there were possibilities of survival. In his former state he enjoyed little chance for safety altogether; for hunger played its cards slowly but surely. And no matter how reluctant the thought, how prolonged the hesitation, the hungry father and husband inevitably followed the path directly to the recruiting center. The hottest fiend of Bolshevism is thus pressed into the horde of Bolshevik enthusiasts by the devastating effect of the blockade, and in the depths of his famished soul he cries with the rest of them, "Long live our bread-givers!" Indeed, a nation lives on its stomach.

Now if this inhuman blockade were lifted; if food were admitted into the land, at least to the extent allowed to Germany; if the Russian populace were not forced to turn for food, for a crumb of bread, a piece of herring, a can of this or that, solely to the hand of the Bolsheviki; if the Russian subject were impressed with the unwillingness of the outer world to let his wife, child, old mother, or sweetheart to perish for the lack of a bit of bread, would they throng to the malodorous barracks to risk their lives for the sake of Bolshevism? I say: No!

WHAT N. LENINE THINKS ABOUT IT

But even more convinced was I in this theory when I happened to hear almost this same opinion from the lips of the Prince of Paupers, Nicholai Lenine. It was in October, 1918, when after a midnight raid when I was bereft by a score of Bolshevik officials, of everything I possessed, that I was honored to be presented, before the eyes of his proletarian majesty and had a long conference with him.

Through the agencies of one of my wife's acquaintances, namely, through the commandant of the Kremlin, the ex-journalist, Bontche-Bruievich, I was enabled to approach with no slight difficulty, the imposing audience chamber of the proletarian dictator. It was on a Thursday, as I remember, about eleven in the morning. The Bolshevik premier was enthroned in one of the royal chambers of the Russian czars of the middle ages, in the same room where his predecessor, Ivan the Terrible, had issued ukases similar to those of Lenine, the Red. He was seated at a large council table bedecked with a gory covering. (This table was a novelty; in my pre-revolutionary visits to the Kremlin I had never seen this piece of furniture). On that table were strewn pamphlets and newspapers in various languages.

In accordance with diplomatic usage I addressed myself to Lenine in French, the language in which I had written my letter requesting the audience. Lenine responded in fluent English to the

effect, if I so desired, I could employ my native tongue. I was astonished at the proletarian ruler's mastery of the English language. His vocabulary was that of a scholar; in fact, quite pedantic in choice of phrases. And the diction was perfect; a faint trace of foreign accent being noticeable now and then, when Lenine became excited. The Arch-Bolshevik watched every movement I made with marked suspicion; although he must have known the scrupulous examinations to which his visitors are subjected prior to admission into his presence. Apparently the wound inflicted by the woman-assassin not long before had not yet been healed in his memory. And Lenine for this reason, fancied an enemy in every face he met.

Because of several translations I was forced to make for the Soviet, it seemed that the sound of my name was not strange to the ears of Lenine. The dictator hinted this himself in order to indicate his familiarity with every detail of official activity. It was, therefore, in a tone of informality that he turned to me and commented: "I thought very well of your translation of the Hilquit-Untermeyer debate on Socialism which you recently made for us. How does it happen that you have mastered our difficult Russian tongue so easily?"

"There ought to be little wonder in that fact, sir," I rejoined, "for I have been living in Russia for nearly ten years. But what amazes me, indeed, is that the proletarian premier has acquired such fluent command of the intricate English! So far as I am aware you have never lived in England or America."

This compliment evidently appealed to Lenine. But seemingly unwilling to prolong the conversation on this subject, he turned abruptly: "I spent a short time in England—but in what way can I be of service to you, comrade?"

His transition was so sudden that I was for a moment at a loss. But the purpose of my errand immediately rushed to my tongue and I began:

"I—er wish to acquaint you, sir, with the facts of a case that ought to interest you, although it touches upon a matter chiefly of personal interest."

"Tell it. I hear you," the dictator remarked.

I set forth in a few words the incidents connected with the raid committed upon my quarters, elaborating on the essential details and mentioning the approximate value of the objects confiscated. In finale, I sought Lenine's opinion on the issue as to whether a citizen of a friendly nation—and one moreover, entitled to diplomatic immunity—was not considered to be free from the yoke of national confiscation.

Lenine, listening attentively, rested his head upon his arm and knitted his brows in cogitation.

I availed of the moment to study the features of the premier. This was not my first opportunity to view the personality of Nicholai Lenine. Ten years before, in my university course at Geneva, I had heard Lenine, then a slightly popular emigrant, holding an informal lecture on socialism. Long thereafter, in the day of Kerensky, I saw this same figure posed on the balcony of the ballet dancer—Kshesinsky's palace in Petrograd. I also read a few

monographs by Lenine on political economy. But for the first time I was that day in the immediate vicinity of this historic figure.

I was, naturally, curious to analyze the type of genius inherent in that spirit which could upturn half of the world in a few months. Surely, such a leader must have that divine fire capable of kindling the hearts of men to lofty aspirations. How could it be otherwise? But my effort was in vain. No sign of the superman was visible. One of the ordinary Russian countenances, with ordinary manners of the Russian student, unable to dispose his hands and feet conveniently. The eyes, which are usually mirrors of human understanding—Lenine's Tartar sight reflected no heavenly vision. In contrary, they betrayed a sluggishness, dull and abnormal—perhaps a trace of degeneration. This suspicion was borne out by the pointedness of his forehead. Occasionally, when a bright thought sped through his mind, his eyes seemed to flicker in keen enthusiasm, but even then the gleam was eloquent of fanaticism rather than of inspired genius.

Lenine did not long ponder over my problem. His visage quickly assumed the quasi-official expression of the democratic leader and without the least hesitation he declared his verdict: "I am not in entire accord with the various steps taken by the different Soviets, but I have no authority to hinder their action. Your case is exceptional, I admit; but that it is 'unjust,' as you claim, I cannot see. You just expressed yourself that your government has not openly declared war against us—h'mph, that is

not exactly so. The prisoners in American uniform we have taken on the Murman coast seem to contradict your view. I trust that you, personally, who have seen the Czar's despotism, Kerensky's helplessness, and our constructive efforts—you look upon us with eyes different from those of the uninformed foreigner. I must sum up in this wise: In the eyes of the Soviet you are merely a rich citizen of a hostile nation. In that case, how can you expect better treatment than that accorded to our own leading bourgeoisie."

"Unfortunately, Mr. Premier, I cannot agree with you," I exclaimed. "Please do not overlook the fact that in confiscating Russian wealth you are confiscating property accumulated in this country. This may in your fashion explain the cause for your 'nationalization.' But when the Petrograd Soviet breaks into my house at midnight and rifles the wealth I brought from my own country—you are aware—I earned nothing in your country—then I am compelled to view, in my simple democratic way, this whole affair as a fine feat of midnight burglary."

Lenine's face had been so vastly altered this instant that I scarcely recognized it. A very slight smile lighted his wearied, stern visage. He probably discerned that I was grieved not so much at my material loss, but of the ethics of the principles. Who knows? At any rate, putting his hand on my arm, he exclaimed: "Perhaps you are right. I will do what I can for you. But I promise nothing for certain."

I have always considered Lenine as a serious character. Having descended from a noble ancestry whose blood had flowed for Russian honor on battle-fields and in revolutions for generations, it was hardly possible for Vladimir Ilitch Ulianoff—Nicolai Lenine—to be reckoned a traitor to his father-land. If he were a tool of the Prussian junkers, I was convinced that Lenine had filled this role unconsciously. Being an inveterate enemy of the scepter and crown, it was hardly credible that he could ally himself with such obnoxious imperialists as the German general staff. Yet Lenine was only one; and one swallow, as the saying goes, never brings a summer.

I was certain that the Bolshevik uprising had been fostered by Teuton interests. For immediately after the October revolution Lenine himself had avowed in the official Soviet organ that since the beginning of Kerensky's regime, he had been financed by German Socialists through the medium of Karl Liebknecht. I have reflected that these finances might have sprung originally from the imperial treasury, but I was almost impelled to doubt that this Bolshevik dreamer could be aware of this iniquitous source. Trotsky, Zinovieff, Joffe and others were certainly subsidized by the Kaiser, but surely, not Lenine! I recollect Trotsky's boasting at the Smolny Institute that he would let no such question as "Whence cometh the money" obstruct the path of the great humanitarian ideal of freeing the enslaved.

This cynical speech had shown the true character of the Bolshevik leaders, that is, of all save

Lenine. He is indeed the moral mentor of Bolshevism. He clarified the point that such revolution as Russia's could never transpire by means of money, but solely through lofty principles. And he expressed this conviction with such sincerity that I was forced to conclude that though Lenine might be a fanatic he was truly no knave.

Our talk had centered on money. A few months previously the Czecho-Slovaks had captured Kazan with the entire Russian gold reserves. I suggested to Lenine the possible effects of this tremendous loss.

"Only the best effects will result for us," he stated vigorously. "Money has no value for us. Our chief purpose is to destroy the very basis of the capitalistic system. The only sad feature is that this money had fallen into the hands of our enemies whom it might strengthen temporarily. But we do not fear them. Their future is dismal. They are worthy followers of Kerensky—without spirit or principle. Kerensky had everything and we defeated him. They have almost nothing—and what can they do to us? Open a morning paper and you will read that every day their troops are deserting to our ranks in full squadrons. What, think you, is doing this? Money? No. Our high principles and our constant propaganda of these principles within their lines."

"So may it be, I admitted, 'but this cannot last forever; if your men are not dying from the enemy's bullets they fall by the thousands from a much stronger enemy—from the all-destructive hunger.'

Hunger!" exclaimed the dictator with a sudden laugh. 'Hunger is our truest associate; our entire victory depends on hunger, and let me tell you that our men are not suffering from hunger in the least; there is no starvation in our army. Our fighters are fairly well fed. Only those who do not support our ideals are condemned to starvation.'

Here for the first time I understood to what degree the entente blockaders are playing into the hands of the Bolsheviks. Lenine, apparently, guessed my thought, and his tiny Tartar eyes revealed a hidden sneer. I was not much pleased with this mocking expression of the dictator, and discreetly returned to the previous topic. 'If you are so opposed to money, why are your printing presses turning it out so intensively?'

Lenine replied without hesitation: "Only to make it absolutely worthless! We have already arrived at that stage when you can buy nothing for money. The peasant will sell you no bread or potatoes for money; he wants boots, clothing or tools in exchange. If you want to eat—work. Sit down at the weaving loom or at the cobbler's bench. If you produce nothing—die! Our Bolshevik system has no place for idlers!"

I felt myself doused as with a bucket of cold water. This was frankness enough; aye brutal frankness! And, indeed, the state to which the country had been reduced had been accurately depicted by Lenine. I recalled an experience a few days before when I tried to purchase a blanket in the Alexandrovsky market.

“ ‘How much do you want for your ware?’ I asked.

“ ‘Twenty pounds of bread!’ the dealer replied.

“ ‘Where can I get bread? How much money do you want?’

“ ‘Money? What is it good for! Have no bread? Give potatoes or grits.’

I dismissed this incident from my mind as merely a consequence of a prolonged and unfortunate war and its preying effect upon the minds of the hungry. But that this state of affairs could be the result of direct official effort was until now scarcely within my comprehension. A government ruining its own currency!

But the large wall clock pointed accusingly to the closing minute of the interview. I rose. At the last moment a thought struck me which I considered of possible interest to my government.

“After you have destroyed your currency,” I asked, “how will you repay your obligations to America, England and France? Of course, the present regime intends to assume the debts inherited from its predecessors. As jurist, you are aware that the heir assumes both the assets and liabilities included in his heritage.”

Lenine, who had previously risen from his chair, now quickly resumed his sitting posture. In his abrupt direct manner, he pronounced vigorously and distinctly:

“We believe—or better, we are convinced—that we shall not be obliged to repay these old debts. Not because we will not want to, but because we will not need to. Two years, at the longest—and the

obsolete capitalistic system must vanish from the surface of the earth. And our anti-capitalistic comrades, the future proletarian ruler of Europe and America will, surely not seek to molest Russia—the Mother of International Bolshevism—with the old debts arranged among its late oppressors. If, however, my calculations delude me—which I hardly think possible—then we will treat these obligations in the natural way, through the channels of international trade.

“Russia is rich!” proclaimed the fanatic economist. “Our super and subsurface resources are inexhaustible. If we shall have to pay, we will pay with the produce of our rich mines and endless forests. But think not that we will be so stupid and so ignorant as the czarists, who bestowed concessions without reckon or thought! O, no! Many of us have specialized in agricultural and economic matters and have a fair estimate of the correct appraisal of our resources. Every vein and every tree will be under the control of our national overseers. That we do not consider the worth of money is by no means an indication that we likewise consider our natural resources of no value. We are no destroyers of Russia!”

With these words my audience with him came to an end. Exactly forty-five minutes had been its duration.

That Russia was indescribably rich I always knew, but that the Bolsheviki were making a scientific appraisal of her resources was certainly unexpected news. If I had only more time I would have

asked how so scientific a view could be reconciled with the terroristic overturn of industry. Naturally, Lenin might have had his explanation for this, too.

What impressed me most since the interview was the fact that Lenin was not at all so extravagant with the Russian paper money as he implied. On the contrary, he seemed to take good care of these notes. For instance, the Russian ruble has at that time depreciated more than ten times. Lenin has ascertained this to exact valuation, and had adjusted salaries accordingly—10 copecks to the ruble. The worker who once earned 50—60 Rs. per month now receives 500—600 rubles. And this is not all. If one member of a family is employed by the government—there are no private employers any longer—no other members of the family can work. If the head of the family cannot sustain all then another member may work, but the head receives a reduced wage. This shows how economically they distribute even their paper money.

Another interesting point is seen on departure from Russia. In the first place none is generally permitted to leave the country. But when one is, fortunately, for special reasons, allowed departure, then he is allowed to take with him only 500 rubles. From this we can see that the entire distribution of paper money turned out by the presses in twenty-four hours is strictly confined to Russia.

It reminds me of a reckless son of a multi-millionaire, hurling bank-notes taken from the father's safe, through the open window of his house. This money falls into his own garden, where his father's

faithful servants pick it up and bring it back to the safe.

This is the present state of Russia. Chaotic, upturned—but not entirely ruined. Sick, very sick, but not yet dead.

THE END.

(PRINTED BY NEWS-POST, FREDERICK, MD.)

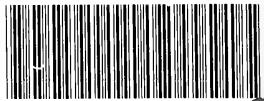


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